

December 2, 2019

Dan Logsdon, Director
National Center for Interstate Compacts Council of State Governments
1776 Avenue of the States
Lexington, KY 40511

Dear Mr. Logsdon,

On behalf of the Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing I am writing to express our support for the Audiology & Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact (ASLP-IC) that would allow audiologists and speech-language pathologists (SLPs) to practice across state lines.

AG Bell is a 125-year-old nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing listening and spoken language for individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing. When babies are born with hearing loss, AG Bell is their family's resource for information and guidance in helping their child acquire hearing technology and training to learn to listen and speak and enjoy the benefits of full participation in our society. The association ensures that parents are well informed, professionals are well qualified, and individuals are supported and able to advocate for their own needs for support and accommodations in education and the work force. Towards this end, it is essential that children and families have access to qualified audiologists and SLPs who can provide the supports and training necessary for children who are deaf or hard of hearing to acquire listening and spoken language.

A significant challenge for many of the families who look to AG Bell for support is finding qualified professionals near to their homes. Since 2005, the AG Bell Academy for Listening and Spoken Language has worked to increase the number of certified listening and spoken language providers (denoted as LSLS Cert. AVT or LSLS Cert AVEEd) so that children who are deaf or hard of hearing and their families will have access to qualified professionals in their immediate geographic area. Though we have made great strides in increasing the number of qualified professionals, there remains a need for many families to access these services via telehealth. The ASLP-IC will expand opportunities for children who are deaf or hard of hearing and their families to obtain services from qualified providers who may live far from their homes, in other states or regions of the country. Additionally, access to qualified audiologists will be greatly expanded through the ASLP-IC.

Thank you for your effort to support state-level legislation related to the ASLP-IC. I am confident our state chapters and members will be willing and able to provide grassroots support to ensure passage in their states. We look forward to joining you and the other supporting organizations in this effort.

Sincerely,



Emilio Alonso-Mendoza, J.D., CFRE, CEO, AG Bell

Cc: Susan Adams, ASHA Director of State Legislative and Regulatory Affairs